

HONORING THE SORESENS ON THEIR 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

Mr. ASHCROFT. Mr. President, families are the cornerstone of America. The data are undeniable: Individuals from strong families contribute to the society. In an era when nearly half of all couples married today will see their union dissolve into divorce, I believe it is both instructive and important to honor those who have taken the commitment of "till death us do part" seriously, demonstrating successfully the timeless principles of love, honor, and fidelity. These characteristics make our country strong.

For these important reasons, I rise today to honor John and Rosalie Sorensen of Des Plaines, IL, formerly of Howard's Ridge, MO, who on July 12, 1997, will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. My wife, Janet, and I look forward to the day we can celebrate a similar milestone. The Sorensens' commitment to the principles and values of their marriage deserves to be saluted and recognized.

TRIBUTE TO KATHRYN HOOK

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, in my almost 42 years of service to the U.S. Senate, I have probably had more than one thousand individuals work for me as members of my personal and committee staffs. Among these legions, I have been fortunate to have had a number of particularly capable, dedicated, and selfless men and women who truly went above and beyond the call of duty in assisting me and in carrying out their duties as staffers. Today, I rise to pay tribute to Miss Kathryn Hook, a person who has been with me for just short of 30 years, whose work and efforts have been invaluable, and to many South Carolinians, is as much a part of my office as I am. Sadly, today marks Kathryn's last day on the job.

A woman with a warm and outgoing personality, Kathryn first arrived in my office in 1967 and immediately began to make friends not only among my staff, but with our neighbors in other Senate offices. I recall that at that time the late Bobby Kennedy was one of my colleagues, and he had an office adjacent to mine. As he would walk down the halls with his dogs, he would almost inevitably stop into my reception room to say "hello" to Kathryn. It is my understanding that later, when Senator Kennedy ran for President, he asked Kathryn if she was interested in working on his South Carolina campaign activities, and as tempting and flattering an offer as that most certainly must have been, commendably, Kathryn chose to stay in my employ. It is a decision that I am grateful she made.

For almost three decades, Kathryn has been such a fixture on my staff, she has earned the title of "Dean of Women," and she has made countless

contributions to the operations of this office in many different ways. Working at the back of the reception room of 217 Russell, dubbed the "Dogwood Alcove" because of the personal touches she has made to her workspace, Kathryn has pleasantly, politely, and warmly greeted probably tens of thousands of visitors to my office, ranging from constituents who have come by to say "hello," to senior American and foreign government officials who are making official calls on matters of policy. In each case, she has demonstrated the famed hospitality of South Carolinians, making anyone who enters my suite feel as though they are a long lost friend, and making sure that they know that they are welcome in my office.

Perhaps more importantly, though, is the influence she has had on young staffers who have worked under her. Kathryn is a woman of high and uncompromising standards, and a strong work ethic. In the course of her career, she has passed these commendable qualities and characteristics on to those who have been her direct subordinates, as well as to many other staffers who have worked with her through the years. There is no question that Kathryn has left her mark on an untold number of STROM THURMOND staffers, and that her influence has benefitted these individuals both while they worked for me, and in subsequent jobs. I have no doubt that there are hundreds of people, particularly women, who owe their success in life to the lessons they learned from Kathryn Hook.

Of course, Kathryn's contributions go far beyond that of her duties in the reception room and as the personal assistant to my chief of staff. She is the point of contact for any number of South Carolinians, particularly those from her hometown of Florence, who know Kathryn and feel comfortable contacting her on a multitude of issues that range from correcting problems with a relative's Social Security check, to legislative issues. Kathryn's intimate knowledge of office policy, procedures, and history has made her a useful resource for staff members who need advice and guidance on issues or have a question that can only be answered by her institutional memory.

Mr. President, Kathryn Hook is a unique and special woman in many different ways, and it is impossible to cite all of the highlights of her career or to adequately summarize the impact she has had in my office. Suffice it to say, her efforts over the years have helped me do my job as a legislator and in assisting the people of South Carolina. Kathryn's long tenure of invaluable service to our State was recently recognized and honored by the Governor of South Carolina who presented her with our State's highest award, "The Order of the Palmetto," in a ceremony held in the Strom Thurmond Room of the U.S. Capitol. Regrettably, I do not have an equivalent commendation with which I can present her, but I hope she

knows that I have valued her faithful service, will certainly miss her sense of humor and energetic personality, and that I am pleased to count her among my friends. It is a bittersweet day on which I say goodbye to Kathryn Hook, as not only is it her last day on my staff, but it is her birthday as well. I wish her many more years of health and happiness, and I thank her for her many years of devoted and selfless service.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. COLLINS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the leader's designee in morning business. The Democratic leader is allotted 60 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DISASTER RELIEF

Mr. DORGAN. Madam President, I come to the floor today again to speak of the disaster relief bill, the so-called supplemental appropriations bill. This bill provides substantial amounts of money for disaster relief, especially for people of the region of North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota, the region where victims of blizzards, fires and floods now await action by the U.S. Congress on a disaster appropriations bill.

On Saturday, in the Bismarck Tribune, an associated press writer, John McDonald, was in Grand Forks, ND. The headline says, "Patience Short with Congress." Here is what the story says:

Ranee Steffan had strong words for Members of Congress who think flood victims can wait while the bickering continues in Washington over a disaster relief bill.

"You are playing with our lives," Mrs. Steffen warned Friday from the sweltering travel trailer that she and her family now call home. "This isn't some game. You should come here and walk in my shoes for a day."

Homeless for over a month, out of work and bounced from one temporary shelter to another, the wife and mother of two is fed up with lawmakers who seem to think that Grand Forks residents are "getting along just fine."

All she wants, she says, is to move back into a real home and to start working again.

But that isn't likely to happen until Congress and President Clinton work out differences in the emergency spending bill that has \$5.6 million of disaster relief for disaster victims.

I noticed this weekend in the Washington Times, Saturday, June 7, Speaker Gingrich, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, "vows not to yield on disaster aid," according to the headline. He says that after a veto, the GOP